

Oh, marvel of lightness!
 Oh, colour hidden and all at once emphatically clear!
 Like a bright moon carved in ice,
 Green as the thousand peaks,
 Blue as the sky after rain,
 Violet as the skin of an egg-plant fruit,
 Then once again white,
 White as the "secretly-smiling" magnolia,
 And singing a note when struck
 Sharp and full as all the hundred and fifty bells
 On the Porcelain Tower of Nankin.

Her dress is Ch'ing-green playing into scarlet,
 Embroidered with the hundred shous;
 The hem is a slow delight of gold, the faded, beautiful gold
 of temple carvings;
 In her hair is a lotus,
 Red as the sun after rain.
 She comes softly—softly—
 And the tinkle of her ornaments
 Jars the smooth falling of the snow
 So that it breaks into jagged lightnings
 Which form about her the characters of her holy name.
 Kuan-Yin, Goddess of Mercy, of Sailors, of all who know
 sorrow and grieve in bitterness.

"Before the Storm" gives us the New England highway; its pictures are all sharply drawn and illumined as by flashes of lightning. It has something in it that is frantic and weird, the proper factors of a New England legend. We are shown a lost soul who everlastingly drives a yellow-wheeled chaise, a mounted Wandering Jew. The pictures in it have the memorable quality of things fearfully seen.

Through narrow wood-tracks where hermit-thrushes pair, staggers the yellow one-horse chair, just ahead of a lightning flare. Along elm-shaded streets of little towns, the high wheels roll, and leaves blow down on the man's cocked hat and the little girl's snood, and a moment later comes a flood of bright, white rain, and thunder so loud it stops the blood.

Of the metrical poems "Dried Marjoram," with its odd and original stanza-form, is the most distinctive. There is something of an old woman's life, dreary, grotesque and detached, in the stanza that Miss Lowell uses for her telling of this legend. In the other metrical poem, "The Statue in the Garden," she puts herself at a disadvantage. The tale of the man who puts a wedding-ring upon the finger of a statue, and who is then haunted by a metal wife, has been made memorable to us by Prosper Mérimée's "Venus of Ille." Miss Lowell does not succeed as Mérimée did succeed in making us yield a willing suspension of unbelief. All that we can feel about the Julius who put the ring upon the little garden-statue is that he has been reading Mérimée and has been deliberately trying to put himself in a state wherein the story will become a nightmare to him.

"Witch Woman," the Yucatan story, has passion, and the action that comes out of that passion is significant. But the lavish passion makes the descriptions in the story abstract. Reading "Witch Woman" confirms me in my belief that Miss Lowell, to make right use of the idiom and convention that she had built up for herself, should make her actions into ceremonies and rituals.

PADRAIC COLUM.

THE COMEDY OF SEX.

IN attempting a study of the influence of sex upon the artistic impulse, taking Balzac as her subject,¹ Miss Juanita Helm Floyd displays all the erudition and industry of the manufacturer of a thesis, while sadly missing her great opportunity. After presenting us with a letter from M. Anatole Le Braz, a preface and an introduction by Catherine, Princess Radziwill, niece of the eventual

¹"Women in the Life of Balzac." Juanita Helm Floyd. New York: Henry Holt and Co.

Mme. de Balzac, Miss Floyd gives a "biographical sketch of Balzac," and one's first observation is that she omits to give the date of Balzac's birth. This is not, perhaps, in itself a very grave defect, but very soon one comes to see it as an evil omen, for the remainder of the book is one huge omission.

Miss Floyd divides the women whom Balzac knew into "Relatives and Family Friends," "Literary Friends," "Business and Social Friends," and those with whom he enjoyed "Sentimental Friendships." She has diligently pored over the vast Balzac bibliography, of which she gives an exhaustive account at the end of her volume, and she confirms all her statements with references to authorities; she quotes at length from published letters, and shows how many of Balzac's women friends are portrayed in his novels. It is all very piously done, and yet it seems to leave everything unsaid.

Take the *Dilecta*, Mme. de Berny, for example. She was twenty years Balzac's senior, and, according to Miss Floyd, introduced him to adult life, criticized his work, and inspired numerous characters in his novels. But it does not seem to have occurred to Miss Floyd that it would be interesting to know how Mme. de Berny accomplished these things; and yet a *Dilecta* is a common figure in the lives of young poets: she deserves to be explained. Would it not be of value to know of just what such a relation consists, what thoughts were exchanged by Balzac and his *Dilecta*, what anticipations prefaced their meetings, what each thought of the other when they were apart, and what result it all had on the young man's powers of composition? These are the questions to which we may naturally expect to find the answers in a book which claims to be a study of the influence of women on the life of a great novelist; but for these answers we search in vain in Miss Floyd's volume. Again, some of these women spurned Balzac: did this paralyse his pen, or did he in his despair do better work than in his hours of triumph and elation?—for there are artists who forge their material out of their own sufferings and there is the other type who turn from life to romance. What intellectual processes did Balzac undergo at these times of emotional crisis? Here again is matter for study and illumination.

It is not worth while remembering what characters Balzac meant to be portraits of his "Étrangère," as Miss Floyd enumerates them: what one wants to know is how Balzac came to portray Mme. Hanska in this or that rôle. Was it rage because she had not acknowledged a present, despair because she had not answered a letter, elation because he was about to meet her, that made him choose that remarkable woman for the personage he had in mind? Or was the personage conceived in order that he might assuage his yearning by writing of the beloved? Can Miss Floyd have been totally oblivious to these implications, which have their profound social significance?

Anyone who could depict with intuition and imagination the real Balzac alive and with his women friends, and could breathe life into the vast material about him that lies at hand, would contribute an answer to this fascinating problem.

MONTGOMERY BELGION.

A NEW VIEW OF ORGANIZED LABOUR.

MR. TANNENBAUM's thesis in his volume on "The Labour Movement,"¹ is briefly that the movement of organized labour is in and of itself inherently a revolutionary movement in the sense that "revolutionary activity consists in the absorption, the wresting of power and control by one group from another."

The real struggle is for organization and not for the programme after organization is completed. . . . Labour is revolutionary, not because it organizes for purposes of control and

¹"The Labour Movement: Its Conservative Functions and Social Consequences." Frank Tannenbaum. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons.